

Toxic Steering Group Meeting Minutes May 15, 2008

Attendees:

Christina Rose Bush, DCH	Mary Lee Hultin, DEQ/AQD
Dennis Bush, DEQ/WB (chair)	Deb Mackenzie-Taylor, DEQ/WHMD
Gary Butterfield, DEQ/AQD	Amy Perbeck, MDEQ/WB
Mike Depa, DEQ/AQD	Lisa Quiggle, DCH
Linda Dykema, DCH	Divinia Ries, DEQ/RRD
Christine Flaga, DEQ/RRD	Robert Sills, DEQ/AQD
Kay Fritz, DEQ/WHMD	Emily Weingartz, Librarian
Eric Wildfang, DEQ/RRD	

1. MDCH has a new toxicologist named Jennifer Gray. Jennifer has a PhD in toxicology from Michigan State University (Jennifer was not at the meeting because she was doing fieldwork).
2. Dennis Bush mentioned that there is a conference on October 20-21 titled, "Dioxin Toxicity: Mechanisms, Models, & Potential Health Risks". The conference is being held at the Kellogg Center at MSU and is free.
3. Christina Bush mentioned that EarthDay was a big success this year. All of the toxicology booths were well-attended. Mary Lee Hultin mentioned that she got positive feedback from some of the schools. A more thorough discussion of the EarthDay will take place at the next toxicologist brown bag luncheon.
4. The group discussed the request made by Susan Dykstra for someone to give a presentation to her Environmental Science Club at the University of Michigan-Flint. Several people expressed interest. Chris Flaga thought Amy Merricle already had a suitable presentation prepared. Chris will check with Amy and get back to the group.
5. Linda Dykema mentioned that the MDCH has extended the advisories for consuming wild game from the Tittabawassee and Saginaw River floodplains based on data collected in 2007. In summary, MDCH concluded that deer, turkeys, squirrels, wood ducks and Canada geese contain sufficiently high levels of dioxin to warrant advisories for human consumption. A press release summarizing the advisories is available on the MDCH webpage.
6. Subcommittee updates:

PBDEs – Chris Flaga reported that the final draft of the PBDE report was sent to the entire TSG for comments. Due to time-constraints, the TSG members were not given much time to provide comments yet some comments were received. Although this version of the report did not receive extensive review by members beyond the subcommittee, the group is comfortable calling the report a "TSG report". The PBDE

report is currently being finalized by RRD secretarial staff and will be sent to Deputy Director Sygo by the end of May.

Children's Health – Some members of the Children's Health Subcommittee submitted comments to EPA regarding Part F of the RAGs document. It was submitted to EPA by the individual toxicologists, rather than the Children's Health Subcommittee, because they did not have time to get input from the entire TSG.

Mn PSIC – The Mn PSIC Subcommittee has met twice since the last TSG meeting. Kay Fritz mentioned that the work the Mn PSIC group is doing is relevant to RRD's Part 201 Complexity Group discussion. The subcommittee is hoping to complete their activities by the end of the calendar year. The final report should be available for TSG review shortly after the first of the year.

7. The TSG members discussed ways to improve the functioning of the TSG. This discussion was considered important, especially considering the current staff shortages. The group talked about making attendance voluntary, rotating attendees, returning to the more informal meetings/discussions, etc. The group also discussed the utility of the reports/meeting summaries and the relationship of the TSG meetings to the toxicologist brown bag lunches. Ways to improve the start-up of new subcommittees and ways for tasks to be completed expeditiously were also discussed. It appeared that most of the members thought that the TSG meetings were useful but that changes needed to be made to make the TSG function more efficiently. Mary Lee Hultin, Chris Flaga, Deborah Mackenzie-Taylor and Dennis Bush are going to try to redraft the current Policy and Procedure for the TSG to address people's concerns. These suggested modifications will be distributed to TSG members for comment and the final proposal will be discussed with Jim Sygo.
8. Kay Fritz gave a brief summary of the "Workshop on Health Risk Assessment of Essential Metals" that she attended at the University of Ottawa last week (May 6-7).